DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 112 283 CG 010 056

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TITLE Socialization Theory: Where Do We Go from Here?
PUB DATE [Apr 75]
NOTE 27p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Western Psychological Association (55th, Sacramento, California, April 24-27, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Theories; *Child Development; Interpersonal Competence; Psychology; *Social Development; *Social Exchange Theory; *Socialization; State of the Art Reviews

ABSTRACT

This paper assesses certain aspects of current socialization theory, arguing that there are two major developments in the field of psychology as a whole which need to be more fully assimilated in the work on socialization. The first is the attack on trait theory, and it is argued that socialization research can survive this attack only if it becomes more concerned with structural developmental change in its dependent variables. Second, the impact of the "cognitive revolution" is assessed, and the paper argues that more attention must be given to the ways in which children process inputs from socialization agents, and developmental changes in processing capacities. Finally, it is urged that research attention must be focused on the conditions which sustain the effective performance of socialization agents. (Author)

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Socialization Theory: Where Do We Go From Here?

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Studies of "socialization" comprise an amorphous body of material, contributed to several social science disciplines and overlapping the subject-matter of most of the traditional topical areas in psychology. It is an area which has no single coherent set of postulates, deductions and supporting data, but draws instead on several major points of view and a large number of mini-theories growing out of empirical work and ill-connected with any over-all theoretical scheme. Nevertheless I believe that psychological research on socialization over the past two decades has operated from a set of assumptions that do form a loosely coherent point of view, and I feel that the time has come to re-assess some of these assumptions.

Let us begin by examining the intellectual history of some of the research on socialization, giving especial attention to the explicit and implicit theories that guided it. Let me apologize at the outset for the fact that I will not give adequate attention to variations in social and cultural settings; nor will there be time to focus on deviancy; nor will I consider socialization outside the family. We will do well if we can achieve an adequate overview of some of the within-family factors that psychologists have studied as being relevant to the development of children within the "normal" range. Having attempted this, we will be in a position to consider what new directions may appear promising.

I will take as a starting point the research of the late forties and the fifties, in which Sears and Whiting (Sears et al., 1952; Whiting & Child, 1953; Sears et al., 1957) were leading figures. This work grew out of two streams of thought: from Hullian learning theory (including the many laboratory studies of conditioning and learning that emanated from that theory) and from psychoanalytic writings. The intellectual excitement of those days lay in the effort to make psychoanalytic concepts operational, and to formulate these concepts in terms of learning

processes which were felt to be quite well understood in the animal learning laboratories. The process of socialization was thought of as a process in which socializing agents set out a list of socially prescribed behaviors which the child was to acquire. The laws of learning would then guide us to an understanding of how quickly individual children learned the specified behavior. Behavior was seen as being under stimulus control, and the parent both manipulated the stimulus conditions and provided a reinforcement schedule. If a child failed to learn something on the prescribed list -- such as proper table manners -- it was likely that the parents had failed to reinforce him for the desired behavior. We should remind ourselves, however, that the concept of identification was taken seriously, and it was assumed that the child would be motivated to incorporate the characteristics of the parent, particularly the same-sex parent. We used to argue a good deal about whether identification meant anything more than simple imitation. But however one viewed identification, we were convinced that some parents were more imitible than others -- that both parental affection toward children and the exercise of parental authority were aspects of parental behavior that predisposed children to "identify" with their parents and thus take on spontaneously the mature, socialized behavior that parents wanted children to have. Parental use of love-oriented methods of discipline was thought to be an especially powerful factor in bringing about internalization of parental values and socially prescribed modes of behavior. The use of physical punishment and material rewards, however, were seen to be socialization techniques which would only partially socialize the child. That is, the child raised by these methods would conform to social expectations out of fear of punishment or hope of reward, but would not take on society's values as his own. Thus the kind of reinforcement, and the kind of punishment used by a parent, were deemed to be important; but nevertheless the theorizing of that time did proceed from the assumption that reinforcement, both positive and negative, was the basic process whereby social behavior was acquired.

The variables chosen for study included those involved in the specific teaching of certain classes of behavior, such as the amount of reinforcement for dependency and the amount of punishment for aggression; but also included were certain more global "atmosphere" variables such as the warmth-rejection dimension, on the grounds that these should be relevant to identification. It is worth noting that when the socialization studies of this period studied the distribution of authority between the parents, researchers were not so much concerned with the democracy of the family decision-making processes as with the question of which parent was the more powerful and was therefore the stronger focus for the child's identifications. The prediction was, for example, that in mother-dominated families, sons would have difficulty taking on masculine role behavior.

Since the fifties, American psychology has seen a series of massive onslaughts on Hullian reinforcement theory. One of the onsloughts has been led by students of observational learning, notably Bandura, and his colleagues who have been able to show convincingly that both children and adults can learn behavior merely by watching others perform it. The implications of this simple fact were profound, for it meant that an action need not be performed nor reinforced at the time of learning. Children could learn table manners not only by being praised for using a fork rather than their fingers, but also by taking note of the way adults ate, and imitating their performance. Of course, as Bandura has stressed, once a child learns something through observation, the probability that he will actually display the behavior overtly can be shown to depend upon his assessment of whether the behavior is likely to be reinforced; but this is a far cry from the Hullian position concerning the role of reinforcement in initial acquisition of stimulus-response connections.

The shift in emphasis by social learning theorists toward observational learning has not had as heavy an impact on studies of socilaization as might have been supposed.

I believe this is true because the socialization studies of the forties and fifties already had a headstart, due to their foundations in psychoanalytic theory, in recognizing that imitation was heavily involved in socialization, and had already incorporated variables that ought to have a bearing upon observational learning.

There were two theoretical developments during the fifties and sixties that I believe have had much more profound implications for research on socialization. One was the attack on trait theories of personality. The other was the emergence of cognitive psychology -- the work in information processing which has now burgeoned until it has taken possession of much of the traditional territory of the fields of perception and learning, and which is now sweeping through social psychology as well as in the form of social comparison and attribution theory.

I think it is not widely recognized that the students of socialization themselves took the lead, in the 1950's, in bringing the weaknesses of personality trait theory into the cruel light of day. It was the work of Sears and his colleagues that provided the basic data used later by Mischel and others to prove that the aspects of behavior which had been assumed to cohere into personality traits actually did not do so. The book "Identification and Child Rearing" by Sears, Rau and Alpert (1965) provided a clear demonstration that the process of identification was not a unitary one carrying in its wake a set of developmental achievements in the form of appropriate sex typing, ability to take adult-type roles, ability to resist temptation and postpone gratification, etc. I believe the importance of this book has been underestimated. It was a serious attempt to test some assumptions concerning unitary processes in personality development. The unities could not be found, and this fact was made available at the same time that other information of a similar sort was coming to light. The book helped greatly to deliver the <u>coup de grace</u> to trait theory, even though this was not its initial objective.

With the wisdom of hindsight, we can question some aspects of the antecedent-consequent design of this and related work. Psychoanalytic theory is a structural theory, and it posits developmental stages. I believe Kohlberg is right when he argues that the marriage of psychoanalytic theory and learning theory is an uneasy one (Kohlberg, 1969) because psychoanalytic theory is concerned primarily with stage-wise universals in development, and has to be forced into coherence with a model which is concerned with individual differences that are not age related. Psychoanalytic theory says that the forging of the superego, a personality structure that ought to bring coherence in to a range of behaviors, occurs at the time of the resolution of the Oedipus comlex. Presumably, children studied before the age of this resolution would not show the coherence that would result from the formation of the superego. Perhaps the fact that the Sears group studied only preschoolers militated against positive findings. Children studied following the postulated formation of the superego might have manifested consistencies among the behaviors presumably mediated by this structure. But the socialization work of the fifties was not developmental and it was not structural. And as things turned out, it contributed strongly to an anti-structuralist position, in that it showed an absence of personality organization.

In my opinion, the implications of these early negative findings have not been fully digested. The very notion of studying the effects of socialization practices upon the development of children implies that we believe that some of the things parents do have more than transitory effects. We have assumed that if some children can be identified as consistently aggressive and others as consistently unaggressive, the difference ought to be traceable to something in their previous socialization experience. If we cannot identify children who are consistently one way or the other, however, -- if individuals don't have personality "traits" -- then what is there for us to relate to socialization practices? What can we look for as the outcomes of

different kinds of parental actions? I believe that it is this dilemma more than any other that has slowed down psychological research in socialization in recent years.

It is my conviction that personality is not nearly so disorganized as the anti-trait position would imply. But if we are to discover any consistent relationships between child-rearing practices and the characteristics of children, we must become much more developmental in our thinking than we have been. Perhaps an example will illustrate the point. Suppose we considered studying the effects of parent practices upon, say, the amount of crying that a child does. The first issue is whether a child's crying is a stable individual trait at any given point in his development. If a child varies a great deal in the amount of crying he does from one time of day to another, (depending on how tired he is) or from one situation to another, the amount of crying is not a very promising variable if we hope to find a stable rank-order among a group of children that can be related to their parents' child-rearing techniques. However, it may be the case that even though there is a good deal of situational variance in crying, it turns out to be possible to identify certain children who can be shown to be more frequent criers than others if one time-samples their behavior at a given age. But suppose that the amount of crying and the situations that elicit it change radically with age. And suppose further that the rank order of a group of children is not stable over time. That is, the children who are the most frequent criers, relative to other children, at age 3, are not the same ones who cry most frequently at age 5 and 7. It would obviously be impossible, then, to expect that any aspect of early socialization will predict crying at age 5 in the same way that it did at age 3. Does this mean that "amount of crying" is not worth studying as an outcome variable in a socialization study? Not necessarily. Perhaps the amount of crying at age 3 is related to a <u>different</u> kind of behavior at a later age, and if this were so, it might be worth studying. But to attempt to understand developmental consistencies of this transformational kind, we must get beneath the surface of the behavior we are studying and attempt to understand more about why it occurs when it occurs -- why it peaks

at certain ages, and why its meaning may be changing with development. In short we cannot avoid the old arguments that have been plaguing psychologists for generations: arguments about the underlying structures of thought and motivation that are being indexed by the behaviors we choose to measure. To return to the crying example: Hebb (1946) and Kagan (1974) and others have insisted, a child's becoming frightened or upset in a given situation depends upon whether his expectations have been violated. A cognitively mature child enters a period of being upset in certain situations sooner than a cognitively immature child, because he has developed expectancy schemas that are capable of being disconfirmed. He will probably also stop being upset by a given situation at an earlier age -- he has now developed new, more differentiated schemas that permit him to deal with situations that were formerly upsetting. If this is the best explanation of why a given child is doing a good deal of crying at one age and not subsequently, perhaps what we ought to be studying is cognitive maturity and not the amount of crying.

The lesson of this example is this: if we wish to study the impact of a parent's child-rearing methods on, say, a child's aggressiveness, we should have some data showing us that aggressiveness is a stable characteristic over a reasonable period of time. If it is not, but aggressiveness at one age predicts a different kind of behavior at a subsequent age, then we must study a wider range of behaviors at each age and search for the structures that relate an individual's behaviors to one another through development over time. Our focus upon dependency and aggression in major studies of socialization may be an unfortunate one from the developmental point of view.

Both dependent and aggressive behaviors change radically with age in form, in frequency, and the situations in which the behavior occurs. In a sense, they both represent half-way stages to something else. The two-year-old who becomes angry when his mother tries to do something for him, or when she rushes him when

he is trying to do something for himself, is developmentally advanced over the one who behaves more passively. But as soon as the child has learned to manage and regulate many aspects of his own life, he will no longer have so many occasions to become angry; so the developmentally advanced child may show little continuity over time in the frequency of his displays of anger. The same is true, of course, for dependent behavior. As Keister and Updegraff (1937) showed many years ago, if one trains a group of children in the skills that are needed for a task, there will be an immediate decline in both outbursts of anger and clingy, helpless behavior. The things we should be interested in about parents, then, are the aspects of their behavior that foster the development of their children's competencies and task-oriented behavior; these should be at least as important as their reactions to dependency and aggression per se.

At present, we have only a dim idea of what the important cross-age continuities are. But recent short-term longitudinal studies have begun to identify some characteristics of individual children that cohere over time. We need not despair over finding something worth predicting, if we will only work within the framework of substantial qualitative change with age in the specific behaviors available for study.

Let us now turn briefly to the impact of the cognitive revolution. Here again, I do not believe that the field of socialization research has fully assimilated the messages that ought to be available to us at present. Of course, a cognitive view does not set aside the basic mechanisms of social learning. Behavior is obviously related to its outcomes. Within limits, people of all ages behave so as to maximize their gains and minimize their losses, and psychologists working with behavior modification techniques can easily demonstrate that by changing the events that follow behavior, they can change the behavior. Similarly, there can be no doubt that learners pattern their behavior upon that of models. The cognitive revolution has simply

forced us to realize that neither reinforcement nor modeling have automatic effects, but that complex information processing is involved. The most interesting problems lie in precisely how an individual construes contingencies, how he is able to match his behavior to that of a model, and why the match is so often inexact. For students of socialization, it becomes necessary to understand how a child is going to process socialization inputs; we must reckon with the fact that the effect of a socialization input depends upon the nature of the cognitive skills that a child brings to an interaction.

Some years ago, this issue was forcibly brought to our attention through the work in developmental psycholinguistics. Let me remind you of what some of these developments were. Diaries of the early speech acquisition of young children revealed that they went through periods of producing utterances which they had not heard from adults, and for which it was unlikely that they could have been reinforced. A child's saying "He wented" or "My footses are cold:" would be cases in point. Clearly, the child who says these things is overgeneralizing from rules he has induced concerning the proper ways to from past tenses and plurals. Equally informative is the child's response when he is asked to repeat what another person has said. At a certain point in development, children will re-formulate what they hear in terms of the rules they have already mastered and which are apparent in their own spontaneous speech. If they have not yet mastered the passive voice, they will either misunderstand the model's sentence, or they will rearrange the elements of a passive sentence spoken by a model, so that the child's utterance may carry the model's meaning by using a different word order. Thus when a child of, say, five, is asked to repeat the sentence: "Mary was hit by John", the child may either say "Mary hit John" -- a mistake -- or "John hit Mary", a statement which carries the correct meaning but has been reordered to eliminate the passive voice.
If a model deliberately speaks ungrammatically, the child who knows the correct

grammatical form will frequently correct the model's utterance in attempting to repeat it, without apparently being aware that he has changed anything. It is quite a sophisticated achievement, one that comes relatively late in development, to be able to copy another person's mistakes when one knows them to be mistakes.

It is obvious that imitation has a great deal to do with the acquisition of language. Children do not learn a language they have not heard spoken. But it is equally clear, now, that the child makes use of the modeled material in a rule-inducing way. It is not the case that he reproduces precisely what he hears, and there are developmental regularities in what aspects of the modeled material are most easily induced. How does the child go about inducing the rules? The principles of reinforcement do not seem to give us more help than the principles of simple imitation in understanding this process. In the first place, many of the child's utterances are novel and hence not previously reinforced. Furthermore, in the process of rule induction, children sometimes switch from an initial use of a correct grammatical form to an incorrect one such as "wented", and finally back again to a correct form. It is difficult to imagine how the first switch could have been brought about by parental reinforcement. Beyond this, there is the empirical issue: what do parents actually do? In Skinner's book on language (Skinner, 1957), he cites the sad case of the little boy Ernest in Butler's famous novel "The Way of all Flesh". The boy's incredibly insensitive father was shown reprimanding and finally punishing his son for saying "tum" instead of "come". We now have clear evidence from Brown and Hanlon (1970) that modern parents do not behave like this. They do not systematically correct their young children for poor grammar, nor reward them more frequently for well-formed sentences than for poorly formed ones. Yet the child continues to make progress, in a fairly predictable sequence, in mastering the grammatical rules of his parent language. In truth, a great deal of mystery remains concerning exactly how children accomplish this.

Acquiring one's parent language is an important aspect of becoming socialized, and consequently, the processes that are involved in the acquisition are of interest in their own right in our understanding of socialization. But beyond this, the issues encountered in attempts to explain language acquisition may be of broader relevance. We can hardly avoid speculating on the possibility that the phenomena we have seen at work in language acquisition are not confined to this area. When children observe the adult social behavior being modeled for them, are they engaged in inducing rules on the basis of what they see? Is it true that children of different levels of cognitive sophistication are likely to induce different rules from the same observed sequences of events? Are there regular sequences which permit us to predict how children will interpret and organize the available information at successive ages? I am deliberately avoiding the word "stages" here, because I do not want to tie the hypothesis to a Piagetian concept of development, with all that that implies in the way of discontinuity and sweeping reorganization of thought processes at certain points in growth. But if there is at least a predictable developmental sequence, whether discontinuous or not, we ought to be able to show that a child's changing conceptions of the events going on around him have great implications for how he interprets,codes,and remembers the behavior of models. In short, both the acquisitional and performance aspects of observational learning should change with age, even when the objective "stimulus material" is held constant.

To my knowledge, the role of the child's cognitive level in acquisition of social contents has been studied mainly in two areas: the acquisition of aggression from filmed models, and in the acquisition of sex typing. The first area was studied in connection with work on TV and violence, and a series of interesting and important studies has been done by Aimee Leifer, and Donald Roberts, (1971) and Barry Collins (1971). The earlier work of Bandura, (1965) showed that observing an aggressive model who is punished for his actions will reduce the level of imitative aggression, by comparison with observing a model who is not punished.

Furthermore, it has been shown that if the story in which aggression is embedded provides justification for the storied violence, the aggression is more likely to be copied by the viewer (Berkowitz & Rawlings, 1963). But the more recent work has indicated that these effects are found primarily when the motivations of the characters and the consequences for their behavior are made very salient, even artificially so. When the justifications and consequences of action are buried in the usual kind of story that is depicted on a half-hour TV show, interrupted by commercials, neither punishment of the villain nor demonstration that his behavior is morally unjustified will reduce the amount if imitative aggression that the viewer later displays. Collins has found that when the consequences of aggressive action are temporally separated from the actions themselves -- as they usually are in commercial dramas -- young children fail to understand the relationships between the events and the consequences, so that the intended lession of "crime does not pay" is lost on them. There is a clear increase with age in the understanding of the motivations and consequences of actions depicted by models on film. In his more recent work, Collins (1975) has tried mixing up the normal temporal sequences of a series of episodes in a filmed story. When this is done, older viewers will say that the drama is very confusing -- they can t make sense of the story, it doesn't seem to come to a climax or make any coherent point. They can't follow why the characters are doing what they're doing. But younger viewers -- children of 6 or 7 -- are not upset by the rearrangement of the sequence. The story seems to make as much sense to them as it did in the first place. We should note here that at any age the viewers can remember quite well the details of what was portrayed on the screen at any moment: they can remember the color of the clothes people wore, who said what to whom, where the people were standing, and what the scene looked like. What the young viewers do no do, it would seem, is to organize these discrete bits of information to make inferences concerning the motivations and consequences of the characters' actions. Such inferences are drawn by older viewers on the basis of temporal sequences; young viewers

can only use temporal sequences that occur within a very brief span of time indeed.

What are the implications of this work for our understanding of developmental change in observational learning? We see, first of all, that the learning of social behavior through observing models is a function of the level of information-processing techniques already developed by the viewer, and this should be true of learning through observation of their parents and other live models as well as when they watch T.V. No wonder Piaget was able to show that children's moral judgments are based on the immediately perceptible consequences of actions rather than on judgments about the intentions of the actors.

I have been implying up to now that the child's difficulty in making use of information from a model's behavior is mainly on the input side. That is, the child understands only certain aspects of what the model is doing, and the nature of his imitation depends upon how he interprets what he sees. But there are cognitive limitations on the output side as well. If any of you have ever tried to get a highly intelligent four-year-old to copy a diamond, you will know what I mean. Enormous frustrations for you and your subject can be embedded in this seemingly simple task. The child can recognize diamonds and discriminate them from other similar shapes; he can draw all the elements of the figure separately; yet he cannot draw the whole figure. You can give him perceptual training for many trials, so that he can discriminate lines of different slants and angles of different orientation. You can move his arm through the proper motions, or have him trace your drawing repeatedly with a stylus or pencil. None of this helps. Furthermore, when the child has attempted a copy, he knows as well as you do that he has not drawn a diamond. The problem does not seem to lie in lack of perceptual knowledge, nor in lack of motor skills as usually defined, but rather in the sequential organization of the output elements. This problem must be just as real for the acquisition of social behavior as it is for any other kind of behavior.

As a final illustration of the difficulties of trying to understand development through exclusive reliance on the concepts of reinforcement and imitation, let us consider the acquisition of sex-typed behavior. Recently, Dr. Carol Jacklin and I have had occasion to review the research evidence on sex differences, and we were particularly interested in children's imitation of same-sex models. Selective imitation has been widely assumed to be an important factor in the acquisition of sex-typed behavior. Lawrence Kohlberg (1966) insisted, however, that selective imitation does not occur until certain conceptual developments have occurred. Specifically, he argued that a child must understand sex constancy -- must understand that if he is a boy now he will always be a boy, and that he cannot change his sex by changing his clothes or hair-style or activities -- he must know all these things before he will begin to imitate selectively those models who are of the same sex as himself. In other words, in the Kohlbergian view, selective imitation of same-sex models is a consequence of the acquisition of sex-typed self concepts, not a cause of this acquisition.

In our review of research on the acquisition of sex-typed behavior, we undertook to examine this issue. First, it is clear that children's social behavior is quite clearly sex-typed by the age of four and five. By this age, children generally prefer to play with playmates of their own sex; they also show sex-typing in their choice of play activities when they are in a free-play situation where they have some choice of activities. You are all familiar with what some of these sex-typed choices are: boys play more with trucks and other wheeled toys; they play more with blocks, especially large ones, and with games; girls prefer art work with crayons, paints or clay, and dolls or home-making equipment. Where does the sex-typing of these activities come from? Is it acquired through the imitation of same sex models? We located 20 studies in which young children had been given the opportunity

to imitate same-sex versus opposite-sex models. A few of the studies showed same-sex imitation, but the large majority did not. Clearly there is no general or reliable tendency for young children to imitate same-sex models at an age when their preferences for sex-appropriate activities are already well developed. Our reading of the literature, then, indicates that Kohlberg is right: imitation of same-sex models follows the development of sex-stereotyped behavior and is not the cause of it. We should add to this fact the further fact that a child's degree of masculinity or femininity, as measured by toy and activity preference, is not related to the "masculinity" or "femininity" of the same-sex parent -- another piece of evidence for the proposition that the child has not developed his or her sex-typed behavior through imitation of the same-sexed parent.

Where does the sex-typing come from, then? The most obvious alternative would be from direct reinforcement. We would have to assume that parents are reinforcing boys for playing with blocks and wheeled toys, girls for more domestic and lady-like play. When we examined the data on the way parents treat boys as compared to girls, we found that the socialization patterns fit the observed behavioral sex differences in some respects, not others. We found no evidence that boys are more reinforced for aggression than are girls -- in fact, the reverse may be true; nor could we detect any socialization pressures that would make children choose same-sex playmates, nor that would predispose girls to play with paints and crayons more than boys. At least at preschool age, these are not regarded by parents and teachers as activities inappropriate for either sex. It is clearly true that parents (especially fathers) do put pressure on boys to avoid such specifically feminine activities as wearing girls clothes or playing with cook-stoves and dolls. It is notable that much less pressure is put upon girls for conformity to a feminine stereotype.

Why is it that children adopt certain sex-stereotypical forms of behavior for

which they have not been shown to be specifically reinforced? Of course, it may be that there are some biological factors predisposing the two sexes to learn and perform somewhat different actions. But beyond this, I think it is a reasonable hypothesis that they gradually develop a set of concepts concerning what is appropriate for each sex, and that initially their rules are oversimplified. In the old days when boys wore pants and girls usually wore dresses, it was not uncommon for a girl to resist being dressed in pants even though her mother insisted; the mother would want to cut down on the work of washing and ironing dresses and would thus be very ready to reinforce her daughter for being flexible in her clothing choices; but the little girl would be quite stubborn. She would insist upon acting upon her oversimplified concept of what is sex-appropriate clothing. She might even insist on dresses when her own mother was wearing blue jeans.

It would appear that children induce rules from all the information available to them: from what they are reinforced for, from what they see other people doing, and from the generalizations that they hear stated by others, such as: "boys don't cry". A boy of five, for example might understand from observation that boys usually wear shorter hair than girls, & he might insist on a short haircut; but he might not take the next step & conclude that if he always imitated the male model, when given a choice, he would have a better chance of ending up with sex-appropriate behavior in some new activity where he hadn't yet worked out the sex-typing rules. This is a more cognitively complex task than inducing the first-order generalization themselves. Furthermore, when a rule the child has already worked out conflicts with what a child sees a model doing, the child is likely to act on his rule, and to regard the behavior of the model as odd or embarrassing.

So far, I have been discussing the acquisition of behavior as it has been studied in four topical areas: the acquisition of language, copying drawings, the acquisition of aggressive behavior from observation of filmed models, and the acquisition of sex-stereotyped behavior. In each case, I have made the following points:

1. The child does not, and sometimes cannot, imitate the whole range of modeled actions that are potentially imitable;
2. Nor is he simply a repeater of individual acts that have been reinforced in a given stimulus situation.
3. He is a generalizer and organizer. He uses the information available to him, from the consequences of his own actions and what he observes in the behavior of others, to make inferences about cause and effect; he classifies people and events according to a system of generalizations which grow more complex as he grows older. Initially, exceptions to rules are something to be ignored.
4. In his own actions, he combines bits and pieces of what he has learned into an organized sequence that is unique. Initially these sequences are very short, and he can neither understand complex sequences containing subroutines when they are performed by others nor can he incorporate such sequences as a whole into his own actions.

If these things are true, what are the implications for a theory of socialization? Surely, a first point is that the effectiveness of a parent will be partly determined by how well his actions lend themselves to the rule-making processes of the child. For a very young child, it helps if a large part of the environment is predictable. A second implication is that the most effective parent is the one who assists the child's rule induction by giving some cognitive framework for the events that are occurring in the child's surround. Let us consider these two matters in a little detail.

Concerning predictability, let us take a well-worn example. We are all aware that when we are first learning to drive, we cannot drive and carry on an extended conversation at the same time. After we have learned, the driving becomes automatic and no longer requires any attention, so that we can talk with others or think about something entirely different, and drive efficiently. Suppose, however, that the gearshift lever were in a different place every time we drove the car, that the light switch sometimes worked and sometimes didn't, etc. We would have to

continue to give attention to the process of driving and could never let it become automatic so that we concentrate on other things. I believe that this analogy provides a little insight into the famous compulsiveness of the young child. He likes to have the furniture remain in the same place. He likes to have his cereal served in the same bowl. He likes to have family members take the same places at the table at every meal. Having many elements of the situation remain unchanged prevents cognitive overload while he is busy learning about a selected set of the available events. The parent who wants to facilitate the child's inductive processes will try to arrange a predictable environment for him, or at least one where not too many elements change at once. Beyond this, he will be aware that the parent himself is an extremely important part of the child's cognitive space. If the parent's reactions have a reasonable degree of consistency, this too will facilitate the child's understanding.

In recent studies of parent-child interaction in infancy, it has begun to be clear that the parent who almost always responds quickly to an infant's signals has a child who, several months later, is dealing more competently with his environment than the child whose parent was responding sporadically at an earlier stage in their interaction (Clarke-Stewart, 1973; Bell & Ainsworth, 1972; Kaminsky, 1975; Main, 1973). I believe that the predictability of a responsive parent's behavior has helped the child, although this may not be the only aspect of parental responsiveness that matters.

The parent's function in providing cognitive structure for the child also deserves some careful scrutiny. It has been clear for some time that the parent who talks to the child a good deal, who explains his own actions and points out the consequences of certain actions to the child, tends to have a child who is advanced in both his cognitive development and his social behavior. In earlier writings, we used to classify parents' use of reasoning along with withdrawal of love: we called them both "love oriented" techniques. (Sears et al., 1957). Kohlberg pointed out (Kohlberg, 1969) that this was probably a mistake, and this is still another instance in which

I now think he was right. As Hoffman was able to demonstrate in his Mussen Handbook review chapter, (1970) withdrawal of love is not associated with a rapid development of internalization of moral values. A parent's frequent use of reasoning, however, is. Withdrawal of love may produce guilty reactions in a child, but there is no longer any reason to believe that guilt constitutes the basic motivational force underlying the children's progress in inducing moral rules and incorporating them into his own actions. Reasoning, however, is a parental technique which does assist the child in coping cognitively with the complexities of his environment, provided of course that the level of parental reasoning is at least moderately well adapted to the cognitive level of the child.

Let us return for a moment to the finding, mentioned above, that a high degree of parental responsiveness to an infant's signals seems to be something that facilitates the child's increasing competence in a number of respects. It has been argued that maternal responsiveness is important because it enables the child to exert control over what happens to him. There are numerous examples from both the animal and child-development literature pointing to the importance of this factor. A well known one comes from the work of Held and Hein (1963). These investigators showed that a young animal developed good three-dimensional perceptual-motor coordination when it was allowed to walk through a prescribed path in space, but that if it was wheeled passively through precisely the same path, perceptual-motor development was weak. Another example from an entirely different kind of work can be found in Rheingold's work with infants. She placed a 9-month-old infant on the floor beside its mother in a room devoid of toys; an open door led to a more brightly lighted room containing toys that were out of the mother's field of vision. The infant would soon crawl through the door, exploring, and would settle down quite comfortably playing with the toys in a strange room out of sight of the mother. However, if the child was carried into this same room, put down with these same toys,

and left there by the mother while she went into the neighboring room out of sight, the child would protest the separation, follow the mother, and show little interest in the toys. In the same vein, a child who will cry and retreat when approached by a stranger, even at gradual steps, will make friendly overtures to the same stranger if the stranger sits quietly in one place and allows the child to govern the pace of the encounter.

I need not elaborate these examples. It is clear enough that a given unfamiliar situation can either be challenging and pleasantly exciting--arousing an individual's curiosity and interest in exploring--or it can be disorienting and frightening. The effect depends at least in part on the rate of exposure. The individual involved in such a situation is the one who knows best whether the amount of novelty is still within assimilable range; thus, if he can govern the pace of his own exposure, he can avoid being frightened.

A young child's development then, will be fostered if he is allowed, as far as possible, to set the pace of his encounters with his environment, and is given time to assimilate new elements before he moves on to other things. An effective parent must adjust himself to the child's rhythm and be quick to recognize the signs when the input to the child is too much or too little. This does not mean that the parent must allow the child to take complete control of their interactions nor let the child rule the household omnipotently. The firm boundary conditions that a parent sets for the child's actions, and the parent's own needs and reactions, are part of the environmental conditions the child needs to learn about; but the parent's rules can be made more or less learnable.

It seems to me that if we consider child-rearing from the standpoint that I have been describing, we will focus our attention on a quite different set of parent attributes than we selected for study twenty years ago. Among the important things to study about parenting, we would now include whether the parent:

a. is responsive to the child's signals and sensitive to the child's state;
b. is consistent in his reactions to the child's behavior
c. gives cognitive clarity; that is, supports the child's rule-making
d. lets the child take initiative rather than directing and guiding the details of his action; lets him participate in decisions that affect him
e. refrains from rushing or interrupting the child except when really necessary; arranges their joint lives so that it won't often be necessary

You will notice some similarity between these parent attributes and those included in the pattern of parenting Baumrind has called "authoritative" (Baumrind, 1967).

I suspect there are some things that may seem quite incomplete about the formulation up to now. For one thing, the analysis is more applicable to the socialization of the young child, less to socialization that occurs in adolescence or later. But more important I seem to have been talking about a bloodless, passionless child, a little scientist, and I have ignored the intense emotional relationships between parent and child that we all know must have a profound bearing upon the outcome of the socialization process. What about love and attachment, anger and hate, ambivalence? It is now abundantly clear that the presence of a person to whom the child has a strong, secure attachment facilitates a young child's ability to cope with a novel environment (see especially Main, 1973). Furthermore, we now know that it is the parent who has all the characteristics I listed a moment ago -- is responsive, allows initiative, etc -- who develops a strong mutual attachment bond with the child (Ainsworth, 1973). I have already suggested that the child whose

parents create a favorable environment for his problem solving will find fewer occasions for outbursts of anger. In a sense, then, emotional development has not been ignored in our examination of the "little scientist" -- emotional and cognitive development are closely intertwined. But I have not discussed the parents' reactions to anger itself, not the things parents do to create anxiety states in their children; nor, for that matter, the role parents play in creating a positive, buoyant, affectionate atmosphere for interaction between the child and other people. To discuss these matters adequately is beyond the scope of this paper. For the present, let me simply suggest that we need a close examination of the proposition that it is precisely in the area of emotional relations with other people that the longest-range effects of early socialization experiences may be found. This proposition is a basic theme in the work of Freud and Eriksen and many others. I would like to urge that even here, cognitive development must be reckoned with. A young child's perception of others, like his other cognitions, is oversimplified. He cannot understand ambivalence; he finds it very difficult to realize that the person who is showing strong anger can also love the object of his anger. When he is older, he is cognitively capable of dealing with these complexities. Therefore I find it very difficult to believe that an individual simply repeats in adulthood the emotional reactions toward authority figures or loved persons that he learned in childhood. Developmental transformations have made the adult into a different sort of person, with new capabilities for relationships with others. Of course, we must reckon with the possibility that the old, childish patterns of reaction have never been unlearned, but only superseded, and that at some level they may still exist side-by-side with the more adult modes of reaction, ready to find expresssion in action under special circumstances. Those in clinical practice no doubt continually come face to face with this possibility. We should all remind ourselves, however, of what Jean MacFarland said when she was looking back over years of longitudinal research. She was trying to understand why their subjects' interpersonal adjustments in adulthood had proved to be so unpredictable from information about adjustment in

childhood. She said that the study had been overcommitted to pathology, and had underestimated the individual's capacity for positive growth and change. I urge that we must find out more about what kinds of transformations in interpersonal relationships normally occur with development before we can hope to predict adult patterns from childhood socialization.

In closing, I would like to say a few words about the conditions that maintain effective parent behavior. There is still a great deal we do not know about what are the crucial aspects of parent effectiveness, and there is an enormous range of personal styles that will still convey the necessary messages to the child and provide the necessary support for his own development. If you will grant for the moment, however, that we do know something about what effective parenting is like, the next question becomes one of paramount importance: why is it that some parents function effectively and others do not? Here again we must take a lesson from the anti-trait theorists. There is no such thing as a person who is a good parent all the time, nor a bad parent all the time. While some individuals probably do have a better initial capacity to be responsive to children in the necessary ways, it is certainly true that a given parent varies enormously from one period of his life to another, and even from day to day. Research on parent-child interaction has revealed that there is a common element in the psychological state of parents who neglect children, or abuse them, or abandon them, or even simply behave autocratically and punitively toward them rather than being patient and reasonable. Such parents tend to feel that they are helpless in controlling their own lives; they lack hope, they are frequently depressed, they feel tired, confused and overwhelmed by the circumstances of their lives. They feel unloved and unlovable, and that their efforts with their children are not appreciated by anyone who matters to them. Analise Korner has used the term "maternal deplection syndrome" for this cluster of attitudes and feelings. We could broaden the concept & consider a depletion syndrome that might

affect fathers, teachers, probation officers & other socialization agents as well. Hetherington's recent work with divorcing families (1975) has shown that during a period just following a divorce, mothers who have retained custody of young children go through a period of this kind of emotional depletion, and that during this period they are notably unresponsive to their children's needs. As time passes, however, and the mothers become more reconciled to their new life situation, there is a recovery in the quality of care given the children.

The implication of these findings is, I believe, that a theory of socialization cannot be complete if it concentrates exclusively upon the relationship between child-training practices and the development of children. It is equally important for us to understand the conditions that affect the behavior of socialization agents. The existence of a network of social supports for the people who are rearing children clearly make an enormous difference in the effectiveness with which they can carry out their task, but psychologists have seldom been concerned with the details of how these social supports work. It is a kind of research which will no doubt call for collaboration between people in several social science disciplines. I believe that it is urgent now for us to undertake it.

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